A SPEECH

Delivered

At a Conference with the LORDS,

January 25. 1641.

By occaſion of the Petitions from the City of *London*, and the Counties of *Middleſex*, *Eſſex*, and *Hertford*.

By *John Pym*, Eſquire.

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January the 25, 1641.

IT is this day ordered by the Commons, *House* of Parliament, that Master Speaker, in the name of the *House*, shall give thanks unto Mr. Pym for his so well performing the service he was imployed in by the Commands of this House at this Conference. And it is further ordered, that Mr. Pym be desired to put the Speech he made at this conference into writing, and to deliver it into the House: to the end that it may be printed,

H. Elsynge Cler. Parl. D. Com.

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January 25 1641.

At a Conference betwixt both Houſes, concerning diverſe Petitions preſented to the Houſe of Commons, Mr. Pym appointed to manage this Buſineſſe.

My Lords,

I Am commanded by the Knights, Citizens and Burgeſſes aſſembled for the Commons in Parliament, to preſent to your Lordſhips diverſe Petitions, which they have received from ſeverall parts, concerning the State of the Kingdome, whereunto they are chiefely moved by that conſtant Affection, which they have alwayes expreſt, of maintaining a firme union with your Lordſhips, wherein they have ever found much contentment, but never held it more neceſſary then at this time, wherein the Wiſedome and Reſolution of Parliament have as many great dangers to paſſe through, as ever heratofore.

The Petitions which I am directed to communicate to your Lordſhips, are Foure, from London, Middleſex, Eſſex, and Hertfordſhire. We have received many more, but it would take up too much time to peruſe all; and in theſe foure, you may perceive the Effect and ſence of all: Firſt I am to deſire your Lordſhips to heare them read, and then I ſhall perſue my Inſtructions in propounding ſome obſervations out of them.

The Petitions being read by foure ſeverall Members of the Houſe, Mr. Pym reaſſumed his Diſcourſe.

My Lords, in theſe foure Petitions, you may heare the voyce, or rather the cry of all England, and you cannot wonder if the urgencie of the condition wherein we are, doe produce ſome earneſtneſſe of expreſſion more then Ordinary, the terror and perplexity in which the Kingdome labours, is univerſall, all parts are affected with it, and therefore in theſe, you may obſerve the miſerable complaints of all.

Diverſe reaſons may be given, why thoſe diſeaſes which are Epidemical, are more dangerous then others, the cauſe of ſuch diſeaſes is univerſall, not from an evill Conſtitution, or any other accident; and ſuch cauſes worke with more efficacy, then thoſe which are particular and inferiour. 2. In ſuch

diſeaſes there is a communicative qualitie, whereby the Malignity of them is multiplied and enforced. 3. They have a conquering transforming power that turnes other diſeaſes and evill affections of mens bodies into their owne Nature.

The common and Epidemicall diſeaſe wherein this Common-wealth lies now gaſping, hath a ſuperiour and univerſall cauſe from the evill Councels and deſignes of thoſe, who under his Majeſty bear the greateſt ſway in Government. 2. It hath a contagious and infectious qualitie, whereby it is diffuſed through all parts of the Kingdome. 3. It is apt to take in the diſcontents, evill affections and deſignes of particular perſons to encreaſe and fortifie it ſelfe.

I ſhall take occaſion from ſeverall Branches of thoſe Petitions which your Lordſhips have heard, to obſerve.

1. The variety of dangers to which this Kingdome is now ſubject.

2. The manifold diſtempers which is the cauſe of thoſe dangers.

3. The Multiplicitie of thoſe evill Influences which are the Cauſes of that diſtemper.

The firſt danger is from enemies abroad, this may ſeeme a cauſeleſſe and impertinent obſervation at this time, ſeeing wee are in peace with all Nations about us, but (my Lords) you may be pleaſed to conſider, that the ſafety of the Kingdome ought not to depend upon the will and diſpoſition of our Neighbours, but upon our owne ſtrength and proviſion: betwixt States there are often ſudden changes, from peace to war, according to occaſion and advantage. All the States of Chriſtendome are now Arm'd, and wee have no reaſon to beleeve but that thoſe of greateſt Power have an evill Eye upon us in reſpect of our Religion: And if their private Difference ſhould be compoſed, how dangerouſly, how ſpeedily might thoſe great Armies and other Preperations now ready, applied to ſome Enterpriſe and Attempt againſt us; and if there were no other cauſe, this were ſufficient to make us ſtand upon our Guard: but there are divers more eſpeciall ſymptomes of dangers of this kind.

We have many dangerous Traytors and Fugitives now in other parts, who can diſcover the weakeneſſe and diſtemper of the Kingdome, who hold intelligence with the ill-affected partie here, and by all cunning and ſubtile practices endeavour to incite and provoke other Princes againſt us.

Some of the Miniſters of our Neighbour Princes, may be Juſtly ſuſpected to have had a more immediate hand and operation in the Inſurrection and Rebellion of Ireland, many of the Commanders and moſt of the Souldiers levied for the Service of Spaine, are now joyned with the Rebels there, and thoſe Iriſh Friars, which were imployed by the Spaniſh Ambaſſadour, for the making of thoſe Levies, are knowne to have bin chiefe Incendiaries to this Rebellion, and are ſtill very active in the proſecution and encouragement of it.

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The Rebels have a ready and speedy supply from some of our neighbours. Two convoyes of Munition and Armes we are certainly informed of: one, from *Dunkerke*; the other, from *Nantes* in *Britany*: and certainly those that are so forward to enable others to hurt us will forbeare to hurt us themselves, as soone as they shall have meanes and opportunity to doe it.

Another danger is from the Papists and ill-affected party at home. The Papists here, are acted by the same principles, with those in *Ireland*; many of the most active of them have lately beene there; which argues an intercourse and communication of Councels. They have still store of Armes and Munition at their disposing, notwithstanding all our endeavour, to disarme them, they have a free resort to the City and to the Court, they want no opportunities to consult together, they have the same or greaters incouragements from above, and from about them, then ever, in respect of the Rebels in *Ireland*, and the great confusions and divisions which by their cunning and subtile practises, are raised and fomented amongst our selves at home.

3. A third danger is of tumults an insurrections of the meaner sort of people: by reason of their ill vent of Cloth and other Manufactures, whereby great multitudes are set on worke, who live for the most upon their daily gettings, and will in a very short time be brought to great extremity, if not imployed; nothing is more and pressing then necessity and want; what they cannot buy they will take, and from them the like necessity will quickly be derived to the Farmours and Husbandmen, and so, grow higher, and involve all in an equality of misery and redresse, if it be not prevented. And at this time such Tumults will be dangerous because the Kingdom is full of disbanded Souldiers and Officers which will be ready to head and to animate the Multitude to commit violence with more strength and advantage: and if they once grow into a body, it will be much more dificult to reduce them into order againe, because necessity and want, which are the causes of this disturbance, will still increase as the effects doe increase.

A fourth danger is from the Rebels in *Ireland*, not onely in respect of that Kingdome, but in respect of this. They have seized upon the body of that Kingdome already, they abound in men of very able bodies, they increase in Armes and Munition, they have hopes of supplies from abroad, of incouragement here, and are sure of good intertainment from the Popish party, so that they begin to speake already of the transporting themselves hither, and making this Kingdome the seat of the war.

The distemper which hath produced these dangers is various and exceeding violent. Whensoever nature is hindred in her proper operations and faculties, distempers will necessarily follow.

The obstructions which have brought us into this distemper, are very many, so that we cannot wonder at the strength and malignity of it. Some of the chiefest of these obstructions, I shall endeavour to remember.

1. The obstruction of Reformation in matters of Religion: no Grievances are sharper then those that presse upon the tender consciences of men: and there was never Church or State afflicted with more grievances of this kind, then we have beene. And though they are by the wisedome of this Parliament, partly eased and diminished, yet many still remain: and as long as the Bishops and the corrupt part of the Clergy continue in their power there will be little hope of Freedome either from the sense of those which continue, or the feare of those which are removed. And of this obstructions, (my Lords) I must cleare the Commons, we are in no part guilty of it: some good Bils have past us; and others are in prepraration, which might have beene past before this, if we had not found such ill successe in the other. Whatsoever mischiefe this obstruction shall produce, we are free from it: we may have our part of the Misery, we can have no part in the guilt or dishonour.

2. An obstruction in Trade, it is the Trade that brings food and nourishment to the Kingdom: It is that which preserves and increaseth the stocke of the whole, and distributes a convenient portion of maintenance to every part of it; therefore such an obstruction as this must needs be dangerous; the freedome of Trades being so necessary, the benefit so important, as that it gives life, strength, and beauty to the whole body of the Commonwealth: but I must protest the House of Commons hath given no cause to this obstruction; we have eas'd Trade of many burdens, and heavie Taxes which are off; we have freed it from many hard restraints by Patents and Monopolies; we have beene willing to part with our owne priviledges, to give it incouragement; we have sought to put the Merchants into Security and confidence in respect of the Tower of *London*, that so they might be invited to bring in their Bullion to the Mint, as heretofore they have done: and we are no way guilty of the troubles, the feats, and publike dangers which make men withdraw their Stocks, and to keepe their money by them, to bee ready for such sudden Exigents, as in these great distractions we have too much cause to expect.

3. The obstruction in the reliefe of *Ireland*. It must needs be accompted a great shame and dishonour to this Kingdome, that our Neighbours have shewed themselves more forward to supply the Rebels, then we have been to relieve our distressed brethren and fellow-Subjects, But I must declare that we are altogether innocent of any neglect herein. As soone as the first newes of the Rebellion came over, we undertooke the warre not by way of supply and Ayde, as in former Rebellions the Subjects have used to doe, but we undertooke the whole charge of it, and we suffered not 24 houres to passe, before we agreed to a great Leavy of Money and Men, to be imployed against the Rebels, even a large proportion, then the Lord justices and Councell there did desire; and from time to time we have done all for the furtherance thereof, though in the midst of many distractions and divisions, but the

want

want of Commissions for leavying Men, for issuing Armes, and divers other impediments, have beene the causes of that obstruction; but I wish we had not onely found impediments to our selves, but also incouragements to them. Many of the chiefe Commanders, now in the head of the Rebels, after we had with your Lordships concurrence stop the Ports against all Irish Papists, have beene suffered to passe by his Majesties immediate Warrant, much to the discouragement of the Lord Justices and the Councell there; and, this procured, as we beleeve, by some evill instruments too neere his regall person, without his Majesties knowledge and intention.

4. The obstruction in prosecution of Delinquents; many we have a ready brought up to your Lordships: divers others we have beene discouraged to transmit; such difficult proceedings have we met withall; such terrors and discountenance have beene cast upon our selves and our witnesses; and those who have shewed themselvs their friends Patrons, have found it the most ready way to preferment; yet, his Majesties owne hand hath beene obtained, his Majesties Ships imployed for the transporting of divers of those who have fled from the justice of the Parliament.

5. A generall obstruction and interruption of the proceedings of Parliament, by those manifold designes of violence, (which through Gods mercy we have escaped) by the great and frequent breaches of priviledge; by the subtile endeavours to raise parties in our House, and jealousies betwixt the two Houses.

6. The obstruction in providing for the defence of the Kingdome, that we might be inabled to resist a forraigne enemy, to suppresse all civill insurrections: and what a pressing necessity there is of this, the exceeding great decayes in the Navy, in the Forts, in the power of ordering the Militia of the Kingdome, and meanes of furnishing them with Munition, are sufficient evidences, knowne to none better then to your Lordships, and what endeavour he hath used to remove them (but hitherto without that successe and concurrence which we expected) and where the stop hath beene, and upon what good grounds we may claime our owne innocency and faithfullnesse in this, we desire no other witnesses but our selves.

Lastly, I come to the evill influences which have caused this distemper, and I shall content my selfe to mention some few of those which are most apparant and important.

1. In the first place, I shall remember the evill Councels about the King, whereof we have often complained. Diseases of the braine are most dangerous, because from thence sense and motion are derived to the whole Body. The malignity of evill Councels will quickly be infused into all parts of the State. None can doubt but we have exceedingly laboured under most dangerous and mischievous Councels. This evill influence hath beene the cause of the preparation of war with *Scotland*, of the procuring a Rebellion in *Ireland*, of corrupting Religion, suppressing the Liberty of this Kingdom, and

of many fearfull and horrid attempts, to the ſubverting the very being of Parliaments, which was the onely hopefull meanes of oppoſing and preventing all the reſt: and this doth appeare to be a moſt predominant evill of the Time: whereat we need not wonder, when we conſider how Councellours have beene preferred and prepared. And I appeale to your Lordſhips owne conſciences, whether the giving, and the countenancing of evill Councell, hath not beene almoſt the onely way to favour and advancement.

2. The diſcouragement of good Councell: divers honeſt and approved Councellours have beene put from their places: others ſo diſcountenanced: as that the way of favour hath beene ſhut againſt them, and that of danger and deſtruction onely open to them.

3. The great Power that an intereſſed and factious partie hath in the Parliament, by the continuance of the Votes of the Biſhops and Popiſh Lords in your Lordſhips Houſe: and the taking in of others out of the Houſe of Commons, and otherwiſe, to increaſe their ſtrength.

4. The fomenting and cheriſhing of a malignant partie throughout the whole Kingdome.

The manifold jealouſies betwixt the King, his Parliament, and good Subjects, whereby his protection and favour hath in a great meaſure been withheld from them: their inclination and reſolution to ſerve and aſſiſt him, hath been very much hindred and interrupted: Wee have often ſuffer'd under the miſ-interpretation of good Actions, and falſe importation of evill, which we never intended. So that we may juſtly purge our ſelves from all guilt of being Authors of this jealouſie and miſ-underſtanding: Wee have been, and are ſtill ready to ſerve his Majeſtie with our lives and fortunes, with much cheerfulneſſe and erneſtneſſe of affection, as ever any Subjects were; and we doubt not but our proceedings will ſo manifeſt this, that we ſhall be as cleare in the apprehenſion of the world, as we are in the teſtimony of our own Conſciences.

I am now come to the concluſion, and I have nothing to propound to your Lordſhips by way of requeſt or deſire from the Houſe of Commons, I doubt not but your judgment will tell you, what is to be done; your Confidence, your Honours, your Intereſts will call upon you for the doing of it; The Commons will be glad to have your helpe and concurrence in ſaving of the Kingdome, but if they ſhould faile of it, it ſhould not diſcourage them in doing their duty. And whether this Kingdome be loſt or ſaved (as through Gods bleſſings I hope it will be) they ſhall be ſorry that the ſtory of this preſent Parliament ſhould tell Poſterity, that in ſo great a danger and extremity, the Houſe of Commons ſhould be inforced to ſave the Kingdom alone, and that the Houſe of Peeres ſhould have no part to the honour of the preſervation of it, you having ſo great an intreſt in the good ſucceſſe of thoſe endeavours, of your great eſtates, and high degrees of Nobility.

FINIS.